

Weed Board Meeting

October 2, 2020

1:00 PM

Weed District Shop | 3402
Cooney Drive Helena, MT

Members Present

Rob McDonough – Chair
Joel Redding – Board Member
Dave Lewis – Board Member
Orville Johnson – Board Member
Steve Johns – Board Member
Mike Cobb – Board Member
Jim McCormick – L&C County Board of County Commissioners

Staff Present

Christian Lehnert – Weed Coordinator, L&C County Public Works
Eric Griffin – Director, L&C County Public Works
Hallie Kellerman – Admin Assistant II, L&C County Public Works

Guests Present:

Dave Burch – Montana Weed Control Association, Vice President

Call to Order:

Rob McDonough called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM

Approval of Minutes:

Previous meeting minutes from September 2, 2020 motioned by Joel Redding, all in favor.

Comments from the Public:

Dave Burch applied for the Weed Board and is attending the meeting to see how things are run. He was the weeds coordinator for Lewis & Clark County in 1992.

Action Items:

No action items

Staff Reports:

Christian Lehnert – Weed Coordinator: Travel reimbursements should be received on October 16th. Susan retired on August 28th and the department has been working hard on the hiring process. Hallie Kellerman has been hired to fill this position and the department is excited to have her. Christian has been participating in new HR trainings as well as MWCA board meetings and committee meetings. He is also working with GIS department to develop specific maps of roads for the weed district. Judith Anne conversations have been looked into- Christian is updating guidebooks for board members as a result. Spray season is over, all equipment has been winterized, a few seeding projects left to help with for the road department allowing for use of no-till seeders. Budget was presented and reviewed. No questions were brought up. Christian explains we are at 27% of the budget, a little bit high but the last few months of the summer are the first few months of the fiscal year so this is to be expected.

Rob McDonough requested a motion to approve the budget. Joel Redding moved, Steve Johns seconded, all in favor.

Eric Griffin – Director of Public Works: Jail project on hold due to COVID19. Getting a lot of grading done in preparation for winter. Potential weed board member in Lincoln, but still having trouble finding individuals to commit to being on the board.

Discussion:

Mike Cobb- Board member: Rocky Mountain weed board representative mentioned herbicide called Grazon and is wondering if anyone had heard of it.

- Christian responded with what he thought might be in Grazon and how certain herbicides are decided to be used

Mike asked another question about using bugs and spray on a weed such as knapweed and if there are any fungus or plant predators. He also asked about bugs from Canada that are now in MT.

- Christian mentioned it is called an Integrated Weed Management Plan. Biocontrol agents go into middle of patch, spray the outside edge of patch to minimize spread and let biocontrol agents do natural work on weeds.
- No fungus for knapweed but many biocontrol agents for it. Seed weevils, flies, root weevils, etc.
- Dave Burch responded to the bugs from Canada Mike asked about and Grazon, which cannot be used on roadsides-only pasture land

Defining L&C County Weed Board Bylaws: Commissioner McCormick informed the board that the commissioners and the county attorney could not find any Weed Board bylaws on file. He advised the board that it is their responsibility to write bylaws and provided some examples for the board to use as guidance.

New Board Member Presentation: Many members of the board have had long and extended tenures. Eric makes the recommendation to start thinking about finding new members, starting with Dave Burch, to integrate to the board. Eric recommends Steve Johns becomes an ex-officio member and a recommendation is made to the county commissioners for Dave Burch to join. Joel Redding offers a solution to bring Dave Burch on as a “greater Helena area” member until one is found for Lincoln. Commissioner McCormick brings up that this is a good time to think, discuss, and write bylaws since there seems to be some trepidation about how to move forward with finding new board members and replacing previous ones.

Bylaw discussion tabled until next meeting. Rob McDonough asked all board members to review bylaw examples and be prepared for next meeting.

Dave Burch being added to the Weed Board is tabled until the next meeting.

Items for Next Meeting:

Bylaw Discussion and Dave Burch addition as a board member

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn was presented by Dave Lewis. Meeting adjourned at 1:50 PM.